## IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS SAN ANTONIO DIVISION

## APPLICATION TO COMPROMISE AND SETTLE CLAIMS AGAINST QBE SEGUROS PURSUANT TO BANKRUPTCY RULE 9019

This pleading requests relief that may be adverse to your interests.

If no timely response is filed within twenty-one (21) days from the date of service, the relief requested herein may be granted without a hearing being held.

A timely filed response is necessary for a hearing to be held.

TO THE HONORABLE H. RONALD B. KING, U. S. BANKRUPTCY JUDGE:

COMES NOW Randolph N. Osherow, the duly appointed Chapter 7 Trustee, by and through his attorney, and pursuant to Federal Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 9019, files this Trustee's Motion to Compromise and Settlement Claims with QBE Seguros Pursuant to Bankruptcy Rule 9019 (the "Motion"), and would respectfully show the Court as follows:

### I. INTRODUCTION

Randolph N. Osherow is the Chapter 7 Trustee ("Trustee") for the bankruptcy estate of A'GACI, LLC (the "Debtor"). Trustee seeks approval of and authority to enter into a settlement (the "Agreement") with QBE Seguros ("QBE"), currently known as Óptima Seguros', pursuant to Rule 9019. The proposed Agreement will result in prompt payment to the Estate and the immediate resolution of what is certain to be protracted and costly litigation. Accordingly, and as set forth herein, the Chapter 7 Trustee believes that the Agreement should be approved pursuant to Rule 9019.

# II. JURISDICTION

- 2. This Court has jurisdiction to consider this matter under 28 U.S.C. §§ 157 and 1334. This matter is a core proceeding under 28 U.S.C. § 157(b).
  - 3. Venue is proper before this Court under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1408 and 1409.
  - 4. Relief is sought pursuant to Rule 9019 of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure.

### III. BACKGROUND

- 5. This case was filed as a chapter 11 bankruptcy on August 7, 2019. Significant events occurred during the pendency of the Chapter 11 proceeding of which this Court is fully aware.
- 6. On October 4, 2019, the case was converted to chapter 7, at which time Randolph N. Osherow was appointed as Chapter 7 Trustee and continues to act in that capacity.
- 7. Prior to the filing for relief under the Bankruptcy Code, the Debtor purchased a property and casualty insurance policy covering commercial property, inventory and other personal property of the Debtor. A true and correct copy of the Insurance Policies are collectively attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and are incorporated by reference for any and all purposes.
  - 8. Specifically, QBE issued Policy No. CP-0057940-1 (the "Policy").
- 9. On September 20, 2017, hurricane Maria (Category 4) hit and devastated Puerto Rico and other regional locations. As a result, the Debtor suffered substantial loss of its property. The Debtor has made a claim under QBE Policy No. 55-CP-0057940-1 identified as claim number 73316.
- 10. Strangely, the named insured parties under Policy No. 55-CP-0057940-1 include <u>AGACI</u>

  <u>LLC AND OR TWIGLAND FASHIONS INC AND OR WON MANAGEMENT LLC</u>. However,

  Debtor is the insured, the owner of all the property covered under Policy No. 55-CP-0057940-1 and the only party that suffered injury due to the hurricane. As such, no distribution under the settlement

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Per Corporate Resolution and Certificate of Amendment effective September 13, 2019, the name of insurance company "QBE Seguros" changed to "Optima Seguros".

## VI. GROUNDS FOR RELIEF

- 15. The proposed Agreement resolves complicated and likely protracted litigation with QBE; litigation in which a legal or financial success for the estate is far from certain. The Chapter 7 Trustee believes the Agreement is in the best interest of this chapter 7 estate.
- Rule 9019(a) of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure provides in relevant part that on motion by a trustee and after notice and a hearing the court may approve a compromise or settlement. "Settlements and compromises are a normal part of the process of reorganization." *Protective Comm. Four Indep. Stockholders of TMT Trailer Ferry, Inc. v. Anderson,* 390 U.S. 414, 428 (1968) (quoting Case v. The Los Angeles Lumber Prod. Co., 308 U.S. 106, 130 (1939).
- 10. The decision whether to approve a particular settlement lies within the discretion of the Bankruptcy Court. American Can Co. v. Herpel, (In re: Jackson Brewing Co.), 624 F.2d 605, 607 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1980). "A reviewing court will uphold the approval of a settlement if it is the result of adequate and intelligent consideration of the merits of the claims, the difficulties of pursuing them, the potential harm to debtor's estate caused by the delay, and the fairness of the terms of the settlement." TMT Trailer Ferry, Inc., 390 U.S. at 434.
- 11. The Fifth Circuit has held that in deciding whether to approve a settlement, courts should evaluate and set forth in comprehensive fashion:
  - a. probability of success in the litigation, with due consideration for the uncertainty in fact and law;
    - b. the complexity and likely duration of the litigation and any intended expenses, inconvenience, and delay; and
    - c. all other facts bearing on the wisdom of the compromise.

In re Jackson Brewing Co., 624 F.2d at 607-08.

12. The Trustee believes that the proposed settlement is in the best interest of the Chapter 7
Estate because it results in a fair and equitable compromise after consideration of the aforementioned

factors. Further, it resolves a multi-faceted legal dispute with QBE, which could be both lengthy and costly, and it facilitates payment of certain claims. Therefore, in the Trustee's assessment, this settlement results in significant savings to the Chapter 7 Estate and its creditors.

#### Probability of Success on the Merits:

This matter is contested by the parties. All parties and their respective counsel believe that they will prevail on the merits. The Trustee, in exercising his business judgment, believes that the proposed settlement will adequately compensate the estate and reduce the risk to the Chapter 7 Estate. Further, the Chapter 7 Estate has limited resources to fund any of the litigation. The Trustee prefers to allocate resources to the payment of claims rather than to fund speculative litigation that may not yield an economic benefit to the Chapter 7 Estate. The Trustee, having reviewed the matter, has determined that the risk of prevailing, as with all litigation, is questionable and the associated cost will redound to the detriment of the Chapter 7 Estate.

#### Other Factors:

- In addition to contributing to the prompt administration of this Chapter 7 Estate, approval of and authority to enter into the Agreement allows the Trustee to pay claims more expeditiously than if the Trustee were required to fully litigate the lawsuits.
- 15. It is the sound business judgment of the Chapter 7 Trustee, after thorough consideration of the aforementioned factors, that the proposed settlement is in the best interest of this Chapter 7 Estate. The Trustee submits that the terms of the proposed Agreement fall within the reasonable range of litigation possibilities as set forth in TMT Trailer Ferry, Inc., supra.

#### Relief Requested:

16. In accordance with this Motion, the Chapter 7 Trustee seeks to compromise and settle claims between the parties as provided herein.

#### **PRAYER**

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, Randolph N. Osherow, Chapter 7 Trustee, respectfully requests that the Court grant this Motion to Settle and approve the proposed settlement under the terms set forth herein and for such other and further relief to which he may show himself justly entitled.

Respectfully submitted,

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## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

By my signature below, I hereby certify that on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of March, 2020, a true and correct copy of the foregoing document was served upon the parties on the attached mailing matrix via first class mail and by electronic means as listed on the Court's ECF noticing system or by regular first class U. S. Mail. The following parties are personally served through their Service Agent as follows:

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